

## Thoughts from the Elementary Grammar Focus Group

We have worked to create a K-5 Grammar Scope and Sequence based on the PA Core Standards for the 2014-2015 school year. For this year, you will need to use this to guide your instruction and prioritize what needs to be taught before the PSSA's. Every standard listed on the scope and sequence for 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup>, and 5<sup>th</sup> grades was included in the eligible content for the PSSA's. We noticed many of the concepts as released items on the sampler.

Many people have shown concern on how to fit grammar into the course of the day. Research shows that grammar should not be taught in isolation but should be taught explicitly. We have come up with the following as a suggestion on how to fit it in your day.

1. Shorten your Writer's Workshop Independent Writing and/or Mid-Workshop Interruption.
2. Have students bring their writing to the meeting area for Share.
3. After the Share, explicitly teach and model a grammar skill.
4. If appropriate, students may review their writing to identify the skill or create new writing to demonstrate the skill. Example: If teaching possessive nouns, students could circle the possessive nouns in the writing or add possessive nouns to their writing.

We understand that some skills may not be present in the students' work from the day. This would be an opportunity to reinforce the skill through Shared or Interactive Writing.

If possible, remind the students of the grammar skill in the next day's connection.

The standards expect mastery of these skills. It is essential that we regularly revisit the skills through additional mini-lessons, mid-workshop teaching points, conferences, and other teachable moments across the curriculum.

We have developed a tool kit for your use to help support your instruction. There is one master tool kit for each grade level at each building. Teams should decide where their grade level's tool kit should be stored. The tool

kits include standards, teaching points, and/or activities for some of the skills. Feel free to add additional activities to the toolkit. If you do so, please be kind and share with your grade level team in the other building so that they may add it to their kit as well!

We believe that students should be held accountable for using proper grammar in everyday spoken language. Therefore, we would like everyone to make an effort to model proper grammar and correct improper grammar. For example, students often say, "Can I go to the bathroom?" They should use the correct modal auxiliary and say, "May I go to the bathroom?" This is an easy example of how a 4<sup>th</sup> grade standard could be met several years before 4<sup>th</sup> grade. We do not expect our younger children to know the terminology, but to recognize and use proper grammar now and forevermore!